

Eastern Sierra Nevada & Northern Mojave Desert Recreation Information Update May 10 – 16, 2012

Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center

Junction of US HWY 395 & SR 136
Lone Pine, California 93545

(760) 876-6222
TDD 876-6228

Open Daily: 8:00am to 5:00pm

ROADS: Major Eastern Sierra roads are open, including HWY 395. Trans Sierra roads – SR 120 (Tioga Pass) and SR 108 (Sonora Pass) are open. SR 4 (Ebbets Pass) is closed for winter. SR 89 (Monitor Pass) and June Lake Loop (SR 158) are open. SR 120 (Mono Mills) is closed for construction through 5/24. Call 1-800-427-ROAD (1-800-427-7623) or visit the website at www.dot.ca.gov for California highway conditions and construction schedules. For Nevada roads, call 1-877-NVROADS (1-877-687-6237) or visit the web at www.nevadadot.com.

In Mammoth Lakes, the road to the Lakes Basin is open. The road to **DEVILS POSTPILE NATIONAL MONUMENT** and Reds Meadow is closed due to snow and wind storm damage. In Bishop Creek, SR 168 is open to Lake Sabrina and the South Lake road is open. The North Lake road is closed. In the White Mountains, the paved road to Schulman Grove in the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest is open. White Mountain road, the dirt road north of Schulman Grove is open to the junction of the Patriarch Grove road; the road is rough, high clearance 4x4 vehicles recommended. From this point, it is a 1/2 mile hike to the grove and four miles south of the White Mountain Peak trailhead. Silver and Wyman Canyon roads are open; high clearance vehicles recommended. The Big Pine Canyon, Onion Valley, Whitney Portal and Horseshoe Meadow roads are open.

Major highways through **DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK** are open. The Big Pine, Titus Canyon, Salt Creek, Devils Golf Course, West Side and Charcoal Kilns dirt roads are open. The North Saline Valley road is open; 4x4 high clearance recommended. The South Pass into Saline Valley is posted closed by Inyo County (4x4 high clearance vehicles required/travel at your own risk). Rangers ask visitors traveling to remote desert valleys to leave a complete itinerary at home, obtain a backcountry road map and be prepared for the unexpected. Drivers need to be sure their vehicle is in good condition and to carry an additional spare tire, extra gas, food and water. For backcountry road information, check the web site at www.nps.gov/deva ("Plan Your Visit/Things To Do/Outdoor Activities") and the Morning Report for current conditions.

WEATHER: Sunny days and above normal temperatures are expected through the weekend over the Eastern Sierra and Northern Mojave regions. A chance of isolated afternoon thunderstorms may develop over the mountains early next week. Highs have been in the upper 30s in the mountains, mid 80s in the Owens Valley and around 110 in Death Valley, with the lows ranging from 20s in the mountains, to the mid 70s in Death Valley.

CAMPGROUNDS: **INYO COUNTY** campgrounds are open. Additional privately operated campgrounds and RV facilities are open throughout the area. **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**, the following Bishop Field office campgrounds are open: Tuttle Creek (fee/no drinking water), the Pleasant Valley pit (fee/no drinking water) and Crowley Lake (fee/no drinking water). Goodale Creek and Horton Creek are closed for renovations; they will open later this summer.

INYO and HUMBOLDT-TOIYABE NATIONAL FOREST, Lone Pine to Bridgeport, some campgrounds are open. Water may not be available at all locations (due to weather conditions). Some Forest Service campsites are reservable, check the web at www.recreation.gov or call 1-877-444-6777.

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK – Yosemite Valley campgrounds, Wawona (SR 41) and Hodgdon Meadows (SR 120 near Big Oak Flat) are open and have sites available on a reservation basis. Crane Flat and Tuolumne Meadows will open later in the summer; sites may be reserved now. Reservations are accepted five months in advance on the 15th of each month, for a one-month block through recreation.gov; or call 1-877-444-6777. Campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis at Camp Four walk-in campground in Yosemite Valley. For park information, visit the web site at www.nps.gov/yose.

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK, open sites include: Texas Spring, Stovepipe Wells, Mesquite Springs, Emigrant (tent only/no fee) and Wildrose (no fee). Furnace Creek campground is closed for sewer and water line replacement, estimated opening in May; other campgrounds are available in the area. RV hook-ups are available at Furnace Creek Ranch, Stovepipe Wells Village and Panamint Springs Resort. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/deva.

Campgrounds are open in the **SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST** on the Kern River and at Lake Isabella on a reservation, or a first-come/first-served basis. For more information call 1-760-376-3781, or visit the web at www.fs.usda.gov/sequoia.

Cooperating Agencies of the Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center

Inyo County

California - Department of Fish & Game

City of Los Angeles - Department of Water & Power

California - Department of Transportation

National Park Service

Bureau of Land Management

Mono County

USDA - Forest Service

FISHING: The general fishing season is open in the Eastern Sierra and many lakes and streams are stocked regularly by the California Department of Fish and Game. The **BISHOP CHAMBER OF COMMERCE** has up-to-date fishing reports for many locations in the area: call 1-760-873-8405 for more information. The 2012 Eastern Sierra Fishing Guide is available at sporting goods stores throughout the region. Copies of California fishing regulations are available at the Visitor Center, or on the web at www.dfg.ca.gov.

WINTER SPORTS: **MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN** is open with a 1.5 to 5 foot base. For daily lift operation and snow conditions visit the web site at www.mammothmountain.com, or call 1-888-766-9778.

WATER SPORTS: **RAFTING SEASON** on the **KERN RIVER** is off to a *fast start* - experience required. Permits and special restrictions are in effect. For information contact the Kern River Ranger Station in Kernville, or call 1-760-376-3781.

BACKCOUNTRY: Backpackers should be prepared with winter gear for snowy and icy terrain, cold temperatures and sudden weather changes. The snow level on the Whitney trail is approximately 11,000 feet (lower on north facing slopes). In Yosemite National Park, the current snow level is approximately 8,500 feet. **Be Bear Aware** when parking at trailheads - cars must not be left with any food or related items that will attract these animals and result in significant vehicle damage.

WILDERNESS PERMITS are required for overnight travel all year long. Trailhead quotas, which daily limit the number of hikers on trails, are in effect for Inyo National Forest wilderness areas. Permits may be obtained at the Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center (Lone Pine), White Mountain Ranger Station in Bishop, Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center and the Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center (Lee Vining) during office hours. The Whitney zone permit lottery is closed; any remaining spaces are available now for reservations. Day use in the North Fork of Lone Pine Creek is included in the Whitney Zone quota. For more information on Inyo National Forest wilderness permits, including the new reservation system, please visit the web site at www.fs.usda.gov/inyo.

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS: Join in the fun at the **ANNUAL FIESTA DE LONE PINE - SATURDAY MAY 12!** Cinco de Mayo-styled fun; activities start at 10:00am in the Lone Pine Park, with lots to do for everyone - games, food & live music. For additional information, call 1-760-920-0874.

HISTORY DAYS - at the KERN VALLEY MUSEUM - 9:00am to 5:00pm, Saturday, 12th: Celebrate the history of the Kern River Valley with many activities planned. There will be free entertainment including a guitar player, a harmonica player, the Jazz Tones, a puppet show, a ventriloquist and more. For information, call 1-760-376-6683. The museum is open 10:00am to 4:00pm, Thursday through Sunday.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

The **MONO BASIN NATIONAL FOREST SCENIC AREA/TUFA STATE RESERVE** Visitor Center, located 1 mile north of Lee Vining on HWY 395, is open 9:00am to 4:30pm, Thursday - Monday for displays, information and a film presentation.

Visit the **MAMMOTH LAKES WELCOME CENTER** for current snow and road conditions, trail maps, recreation information and visitor guides; open daily 8:00am to 5:00pm, or call 1-760-924-5500.

Remember the days of the "Slim Princess"! Visit **LAWS RAILROAD MUSEUM & HISTORIC SITE**, four miles north of Bishop on HWY 6, to learn of early days in the Owens Valley. Laws is open daily 10:00am to 4:00pm.

EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM in Independence is open from 10:00am to 5:00pm daily, with exhibits on Inyo County; including a significant collection of Native American baskets and artifacts from Manzanar NHS.

The Interpretive Center at **MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**, located 5 miles south of Independence, is open daily from 9:00am to 5:30pm. Self-guided walking and auto tours make it easy to explore the park. Check at the Interpretive Center or the web at www.nps.gov/manz for more information.

Visit the Beverly & Jim Rogers **MUSEUM OF LONE PINE FILM HISTORY**; with exhibits celebrating the heroes, the films and the locations of the many movies shot in the area. The museum opens daily at 10:00am; closing at 6:00pm Monday through Wednesday, at 7:00pm Thursday through Saturday and at 4:00pm on Sunday.

Discover the natural and cultural history of the **MOJAVE DESERT** at the **MATURANGO MUSEUM AND NORTHERN MOJAVE VISITOR CENTER OF THE INDIAN WELLS VALLEY** in Ridgecrest; open daily 10:00am to 5:00pm.

BLM JAWBONE STATION REGIONAL OHV FACILITY is open 9:00am to 5:00pm daily for trip assistance. The station is located 20 miles north of Mojave on SR 14 for pre-trip information; call 1-760-373-1146.

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK VISITOR CENTER at Furnace Creek is open daily, 8:00am to 5:00pm. **SCOTTY'S CASTLE** has "Living History" tours from 9:00am to 4:00pm and "Underground Mystery Tours" daily. Reservations for Scotty's Castle tours are available on the web at recreation.gov, or call 1-877-444-6777.

Reports on current recreation conditions, schedules of planned events and detailed information on visitor destinations throughout the Eastern Sierra Nevada and Northern Mojave Desert are available daily at the Visitor Center. 5/10/12kcw